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Approved For Release 2003/12/09 : CIA-RDP85G00105R000100090004-1

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23 October 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Deputy Director for
Intelligence

SUBJECT : OSR Comments on Report of Strategic
Weapons Intelligence Panel

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We have put together some informal comments on
the [] Panel report for your background and use.

Conclusion a. "The date of crossover ..."

This conclusion is not supported in the text.

The criterion used to measure strategic superiority is not stated. If this conclusion is based on an intuitive net evaluation of several criteria, and strategic superiority is meant to be the capability of one side to inflict more damage on the other after absorbing a first strike or to prevent unacceptable damage to itself, the conclusion is not supported by the results obtained by OSR's study of the interaction of forces programmed by the US and estimated for the USSR. Moreover, once both sides have achieved a capability to inflict retaliatory damage that is well beyond the minimum level of acceptable damage, relative strategic capability loses much of its significance. Results of the studied interaction show that the Soviet Union has probably already achieved the ability to inflict a level of damage that is unacceptable to the US.

Conclusion b. "The requirements for weapons assessment ...
as the Soviets approach ... parity..."

If crossover has already occurred, why worry about parity?

These requirements must be viewed in the light of US military strategy. The US is following a deterrent

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(assured destruction) strategy primarily. US damage limiting strategy is not designed to neutralize the Soviet deterrent posture. This means that the primary US interest (and requirement) is to counter Soviet efforts to erode the US deterrent. OSR interaction results show that the Soviets will not achieve a significant counterforce capability through 1970. The Soviet achievement of a capability to limit damage to themselves to an acceptable level during the 1970's would require an extraordinarily rapid and costly increase in their strategic forces. Such an effort almost certainly would be observable in time for the US to react.

Conclusion c. "The Tallinn-type system..."

The Tallinn-type defensive system cannot seriously erode the US ICBM and Polaris deterrent posture unless it has a high capability against US missiles. This apparently is not so and the judgment of at least most of the community is that it has little capability as an ABM system.

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BRUCE C. CLARKE, Jr.
Director
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